Script

Issue 3
Mar 88

The LocoScript Newsletter

Contents

In the first issue of *Script* we asked you to write in with suggestions for aspects of LocoScript 2 you wanted us to cover in the newsletter. Two features cropped up frequently in the requests we received: Phrases and Scale pitch. So in this issue we'll clear up some of the difficulties you've had in these areas.

Phrases let you type in text that you use frequently by pressing just two keys. In a phrase you can keep just a couple of words or, alternatively, a short paragraph – the text you store depends on the sort of documents you produce. In the article we show you how to create your own set of phrases and save them for use another day.

We looked briefly at Scale pitch and how it differed from LocoScript 1's Base pitch in the September issue. This month, we discuss what it's there for and how you use it. In particular, we explain why we recommend that you select the Scale pitch you want to measure your margins in and then use it throughout your document. As some of you have found out, changing the Scale pitch within a document can give you unexpected results when you print!

In Issue 1 we saw how to produce a mailshot by merging all the records from a data file with a standard letter. However, you may not always want to send out letters to all the people in your data file. So in this issue we turn our attention to 'selective' mailshots and show how a single LocoMail instruction at the start of your standard letter lets you select only those records you want for the mailshot. We shall be building on this technique in later issues when we cover some of the more powerful features of LocoMail.

Since LocoChar was produced, we've had many requests for the grid patterns of some of LocoScript's characters. Some of you want to use them as a model for your own characters. Others simply want to reproduce the characters and add their own special accents, such as a dot subscript. So on pages 11 and 12, you'll find the grid patterns for the lower case letters a to z and the numbers 0 to 9. In the next issue we'll be publishing some of the more inventive designs you've sent in. These range from the serious (Old English and ancient Greek characters) to the lighthearted (telephone symbols and crossword patterns). We know of one gentleman who is even using a combination of LocoChar characters to reproduce his own signature!

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News

Memory Upgrades

You may well have read in the press about the shortage of 'RAM' chips. Well, this is now affecting our PCW8256 memory upgrade. The price we have to pay is rising almost daily – and so, we're afraid, is our selling price. In fact it's changing so fast that we can't keep the price up to date on the order form!

At the time of publication, we have stocks, and the price is £39.95 – but phone us for the latest on price and availability.

(We did our own survey of advertisers in 8000 Plus, and discovered that the only suppliers who actually had any memory upgrades in stock were charging £45 and £48.)

CPS8256 Interface

If you are thinking about using an alternative printer to the one supplied with your machine, one of the things you'll need to purchase is a suitable interface. This lets you connect the printer cable to your PCW.

The unit recommended for use with the PCW (8526, 8512 or 9512) is the CPS8256, which provides both serial and parallel interfaces. There are other interfaces on the market but they are not always 100% compatible with the CPS8256. In some cases, using a non-standard interface can prevent LocoScript from driving your printer correctly – as some of our customers have already found to their cost.

We have now started selling the CPS8256 interface ourselves at the very competitive price of £49.95.

LocoMail Support

In the last issue we advertised for people experienced in using LocoMail's advanced facilities who would be prepared to offer a reasonably priced consultancy service to the less experienced amongst our users. The following list are those people who offered their services.

Mr John S Blandford, Amstrad PCW Training and Support, 15 St Albans Road, Sandridge, ST ALBANS, Herts, AL4 9LA

Mr D F Bownan, 58 Beaver Road, CARLISLE, CA2 7PS

Ms Carole E Coyne, Coyne Microsystems, 45 Stradella Road, LONDON, SE24 9HL

Mr Tony Hicks, Parkside Hotel, 11 Clarence Road North, WESTON-SUPER-MARE, Avon, BS23 4AT

Mr D L Still, 29 Hawthorne Place, EPSOM, Surrey, KT17 4AA

We don't know the extent of their knowledge of LocoMail and so we can't predict the success you'll have in consulting them. Before you seek their advice, we recommend you contact them with details of your problem and find out how much they charge!

Alternatively, you may well be able to solve your problem by purchasing our new, completely rewritten, LocoMail User Guide. This contains worked examples of many common LocoMail tasks and we are also supplying a disc with these examples on it. The LocoMail User Guide, including the LocoMail Examples disc costs £14.95 – or you can buy the disc separately for just £5.00.

Foreign Versions of LocoScript 2

As we mentioned in the last issue of *Script*, we have been selling foreign language versions of LocoScript through our various distributors abroad.

Now you can purchase any of the different national versions direct from us at Locomotive Systems. The languages currently available are American, Canadian, Danish, French, German, Italian, Spanish, Swedish and Welsh.

In addition, you can use your national language versions of LocoScript with the suitable national language versions of both LocoSpell and LocoMail. All of these products are available for the PCW8256/8512 and also for the PCW9512. Each language version of LocoScript 2 costs £29.95 if purchased in the United Kingdom or £28.00 if ordered from abroad. LocoSpell and LocoMail cost £29.95 and £39.95 respectively if purchased here, or £28.00 and £36.69 for foreign orders. There is an additional £10 export charge for each complete order placed from abroad.

Script binders

We are now selling binders for you to preserve your copies of *Script* in the pristine condition in which you receive them.

They are available as green hardback covers and cost £4.95.

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Printers

Better High Quality Print on Matrix Printers

Many of you who are using a dot-matrix printer other than the standard one supplied with your PCW may have noticed that the printer head occasionally does a sort of 'soft-shoe shuffle', printing out only a part of a line at a time. This effect generally occurs when you are printing justified text in High Quality.

The reason for this erratic head movement is that some printers find it difficult to cope with the way LocoScript justifies text. To achieve the right amount of spacing between the words, LocoScript uses a combination of different-sized space characters printed by changing the character pitch a number of times. Justifying a line of text correctly may require several pitch changes. This is too much for some printers and they have to stop and print the portion of the line as far as the pitch change. The result is a lot of 'wiggling' of the print head and therefore slower printing! This effect does not occur in Draft Quality because LocoScript does not try quite so hard to justify the text.

Many of the newer dot-matrix printers support a 'space-extension' feature, which means that the gap following a character can be varied. By extending the gap after the last character in a word it hardly ever becomes necessary to change pitch to get the spacing required. So your documents print faster because there are no pitch changes to slow things down – except, of course, when you have changed the pitch within the document yourself!

We have included printer drivers which make use of this space extension feature on the latest version of the Extra Printer Drivers Disc. These drivers include the LQ1500X.PRI for the Epson LQ range of printers and the LQ3500X.PRI for the Amstrad LQ3500.

These drivers also provide full support for proportionally spaced characters. Up to now we have not recommended using proportional spacing on dot-matrix printers as we were unable to guarantee the quality of justified text. Even using combinations of different sized space characters to try to get accurate spacing between the words could result in a slightly ragged right hand edge. The space extension feature provides the fine control over spacing required to achieve perfect justification in proportional spacing.

The 'space extension' feature on the OKI290 series of printers and the NEC range of 24 pin printers has also been catered for on appropriate ...X.PRI drivers.

Further printer support

We have enhanced the existing driver for the HP Laser Jet printer. This driver now supports proportional spacing in the 10–point Times Roman font, in addition to the supplied fonts. You can handle PS in other fonts by defining the appropriate Character Sets for them using the enhanced version of the CHARKIT program. This is supplied on the latest versions of the Printer Drivers and Character Sets Disc for the PCW9512 and the Printer Character Sets Disc for the PCW8256/8512.

PCW9512 Printer Accessories

Fabric Ribbons

At the Amstrad User Show, we spoke to many PCW9512 owners who found that their printer ribbons ran out rather more quickly than they had expected. Fabric ribbons, which are reputed to have a longer lifespan than other types of ribbon, are now available for the PCW9512 from SBS Computer Supplies: ☎ (0273) 726331.

LocoScript has a menu that lets you set up your printer for the type of ribbon you have fitted – thereby getting the best results. You'll find this selection in the f6 Settings menu under 'Printer options'.

Printwheels

When Amstrad launched the 9512 there was one feature missing. LocoScript has extensive support for proportionally spaced text, but you couldn't buy an English PS wheel for the 9512! This omission has now been remedied. Keytech Industries, ☎ (03727) 42055, who supply the "Amstrad" wheels, have introduced the "English PS Thesis" printwheel.

Both ribbons and printwheels should now be available through all good PCW suppliers, but not, currently, from Locomotive Systems.

Locomotive's new telephone number

We've changed our telephone number at Locomotive. We wanted to expand the number of lines we had available and the only way we could do this was by changing our number. The new number is:

Dorking (0306) 740606

If you accidentally dial the old number, British Telecom will kindly refer you to the new number, without even charging you for your call!

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Phrases

If you prepare a lot of similar documents, you probably find that the same pieces of text crop up regularly. Business letters, for instance, typically use a number of standard expressions or sentences. Rather than make you type these same pieces of text in all the different documents you create, LocoScript allows you to store them as 'phrases'. Then each phrase can be inserted using just two keystrokes. This article shows you how you can put these phrases to good use.

Using phrases is all about saving yourself effort. The most common need for phrases is probably in letters, where they can save you typing 'Yours sincerely', 'Your reference' and the like over and over again. However they are just as useful in many other types of document. For example, an estate agent might keep a set of phrases containing brief descriptions suitable for different types of houses ('mature garden', 'convenient for the station', etc.) or an hotelier might want information on tap about the facilities the hotel offers.

Up to 26 such phrases can be in use at any one time. In LocoScript 1, you could only use one set of phrases but in LocoScript 2, you can have as many different sets as you like, and you can easily change the set of phrases LocoScript is using at any stage. This is particularly useful, because it means you can keep different sets of phrases to suit the different types of document you prepare – one set for business letters, one set for replying to job applicants, and so on.

The phrases that you want to use most often in your documents need to be stored in a file called PHRASES.STD within group 0 of your Start-of-day disc. Each time you start-up or reset your machine with this Start-of-day disc, the set of phrases stored in this file will automatically become available for use.

What phrases are

Phrases are sections of text that are held in memory while you work and that you insert into your document by pressing the PASTE key followed by a letter (the phrase's name). This sort of operation probably sounds very familiar to you because LocoScript has another way of helping you to insert sections of text as you prepare a document – 'blocks'.

Phrases and blocks are stored and used in much the same way. You copy text into both a phrase and a block by using the COPY and CUT keys, and you insert text from a phrase or block using the PASTE

key; the only difference is that you store a phrase by associating it with a letter (A, B,...Z), but to store a block you type a number from 0 to 9.

However, phrases and blocks fulfil very different roles when it comes to preparing your documents. The purpose of blocks is to make it easy for you to move or copy large sections of text within your document or between different documents. LocoScript therefore lets you store a substantial amount of text in a block. Phrases are used to store smaller sections of text, and each phrase is limited to a maximum of 255 characters.

Another important difference is that the contents of blocks are forgotten whenever you switch off or reset your machine. Sets of phrases, on the other hand, can be stored on disc and used when you prepare documents on another day; this makes them much more suited to storing your standard phrases.

Each set of phrases can have up to 26 different pieces of text (ie. phrase A to phrase Z) – though the whole set must not exceed 972 characters. However, you can have as many sets as you want, so the number of phrases you can store is effectively unlimited.

Working with phrases

You can look at the phrases that are currently available using the 'Show phrases' option. The Show phrases menu that appears can only display 12 phrases at a time, so to display the full range, move the menu cursor down until the rest of the phrases appear, or type the letter of the phrase you are interested in and it will be displayed.

The set of phrases that is displayed will typically be the PHRASES.STD set; the set that was automatically loaded when you started up. The menu displays the letter associated with each phrase, and the first part of the text of that phrase.

If a phrase is empty, then the letter will not appear on the Show phrases menu.

If you see letters on the menu that *appear* to be empty, this means there are just codes stored in those phrases; the Show phrases menu doesn't display any LocoScript codes. Similarly, if you save text and codes in a phrase then the phrase will appear to contain just the text.

Creating new phrases

Once you've seen what phrases you have available, you can replace, delete or create new ones as you like.

Whenever you are setting up new phrases, it's a good idea to start by deleting any phrases that you don't want. For example, the PHRASES.STD on the LocoScript 2 master disc includes a paragraph under phrase Z purely to help you to follow Session 2 of the Tutorial. This uses up much of your allocation of 972 characters, so we recommend that you get rid of this before starting to add your own.

You can delete any redundant phrases simply by moving the Menu cursor to the unwanted phrase on the Show phrases menu, and pressing the [f1] key to clear the phrase.

Alternatively, you can delete a phrase without displaying this menu at all. When editing a document, simply press the [COPY] key and, without moving the cursor, press it again. Then type the letter of the phrase you want to delete. What you are actually doing is copying 'nothing' into that phrase, which is the same as erasing it. If you use this method, be sure not to accidentally erase a phrase that you want to keep.

If you have deleted all the phrases in the set you are using, then selecting the 'Show phrases' option will give you the following message:

```
Show phrases
All phrases are empty
```

To add a phrase to the current set, simply highlight the piece of text in a document starting with the [COPY] key (as described in the User Guide), and then type the letter you wish to save it under. Just repeat this for all the phrases you wish to set up.

Choosing the letter to type is the hardest part of this operation. It's a good idea to save each phrase under a letter that reminds you of its content; then it is much easier to remember what phrase you need to paste in. An estate agent might create a phrase C 'close to the M25' or a phrase M with the text 'in need of some modernisation'. However, adding a phrase will overwrite any phrase that already existed for that letter so you may have to do some juggling with your choice of letters.

Saving PHRASES.STD on your Start-of-day disc

- Display the Disc Manager Screen (if necessary, finish editing your document)

- Insert your Start-of-day disc in Drive A (Side 1 to the left) and press [f7] to indicate the change of disc

- Move the Group cursor until it is over group 0

- Press [f1] Actions, select 'Save phrases' with the cursor and press [ENTER]

- The default filename PHRASES.STD and the group will be displayed: accept this by pressing [ENTER]

```
Save phrases
Name:    PHRASES.STD
Group:       group 0
Drive:       A
```

```
ERROR in: Save phrases
New name already exists
▶ Replace with the new file
  Choose another name
  Cancel operation
```

If necessary, accept the 'Replace with the new file' option to overwrite any existing file

The set of phrases will now be saved, and will be automatically loaded after you reset your machine.

Saving the new phrases for another day

As soon as you have changed any phrases or created new ones, you can use them in any document. However, if you switch off the machine at this stage, you will lose the new phrases. This might not matter in some cases (for example, if you have set up today's date as a phrase), but if you want to use any of the new phrases again, you must save the new set of phrases permanently in a file by using the Save Phrases option in the f1=Actions menu when you return to the Disc Manager Screen.

We have received quite a few letters from people who have reached this point and have then forgotten to save their new set of phrases on disc to make them permanent. When they load LocoScript again, they are surprised to see the old set of phrases reappear.

To ensure that your new set of phrases will always be available after start-up or resetting your machine, you need your Start-of-day disc in Drive A when you use the 'Save phrases' option (see above for details).

Using different sets of phrases

You may want to keep different sets of phrases for use with different types of documents. For example you may want one main set of phrases to use in a range of different documents, but also some other sets for specific topics related to your line of work. Our estate agent would probably use the PHRASES.STD set of phrases for standard text used for sending letters to clients but another for preparing house details.

To create other sets of phrases, you simply change the current set of phrases (as we described above), then save this amended set in a new file. When you do this, LocoScript will automatically offer the name PHRASES.STD for the new file. You can either keep this name or change it as you wish and you can store it in any group and on any disc. For example:
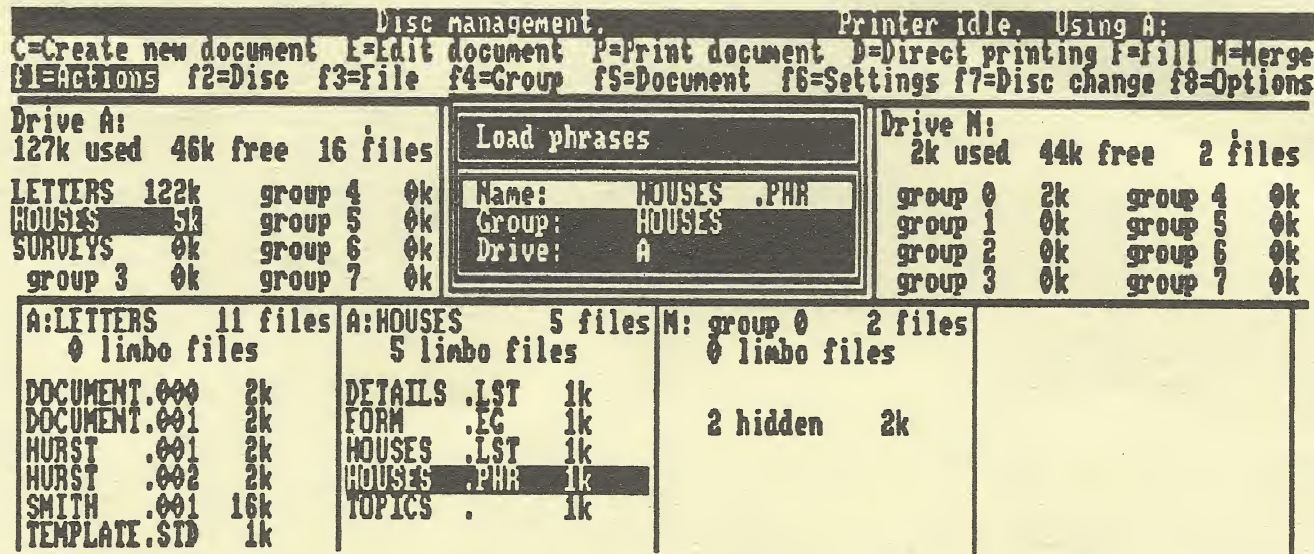
```
Save phrases
Name:    HOUSES.PHR
Group:       HOUSES
Drive:       A
```

Phrases files don't have to be stored on your Start-of-day disc. What you must not do is store them as PHRASES.STD in group 0 on your Start-of-day disc because then you will lose the main set of phrases you've carefully set up!

When you want to use one of these other sets of phrases, you simply have to 'load' them from that disc (see over). Loading another set of phrases will replace the phrases that are currently available from memory (ie. the ones copied from the PHRASES.STD file when you started up).

Loading Phrases

- Display the Disc Manager Screen
- Insert the data disc containing the phrases file you want to load. Press f7
- Move the File cursor until it is over the relevant phrases file
- Press f1 Actions, select 'Load phrases' with the cursor and press ENTER

```
                    Disc management.           Printer idle. Using A:
C=Create new document  E=Edit document  P=Print document  D=Direct printing F=Fill M=Merge
f1=Actions f2=Disc f3=File f4=Group f5=Document f6=Settings f7=Disc change f8=Options
Drive A:                                            Drive M:
127k used  46k free  16 files   Load phrases        2k used  44k free   2 files
LETTERS  122k      group 4   0k  Name:    HOUSES .PHR  group 0   2k    group 4  0k
HOUSES    5k       group 5   0k  Group:   HOUSES       group 1   0k    group 5  0k
SURVEYS   0k       group 6   0k  Drive:   A            group 2   0k    group 6  0k
group 3   0k       group 7   0k                       group 3   0k    group 7  0k

A:LETTERS    11 files  A:HOUSES    5 files  M: group 0   2 files
  0 limbo files         5 limbo files         0 limbo files

DOCUMENT.000  2k   DETAILS .LST  1k
DOCUMENT.001  2k   FORM    .EG   1k   2 hidden   2k
HURST   .001  2k   HOUSES  .LST  1k
HURST   .002  2k   HOUSES  .PHR  1k
SMITH   .001 16k   TOPICS  .     1k
TEMPLATE.STD  1k
```

- A menu with the filename and group will appear, as above. Press ENTER to confirm that this is the file containing the phrases you want to use, and the new set of phrases will replace those held in memory
- You can select 'Show phrases' to confirm that the different set of phrases is now available.

LocoScript's messages

If you try to store a piece of text that is longer than the 255 characters maximum, then the first 255 characters of the text will be saved and LocoScript will give you the following message:

```
ERROR in: Editor
Phrase is too long
▶ continue
```
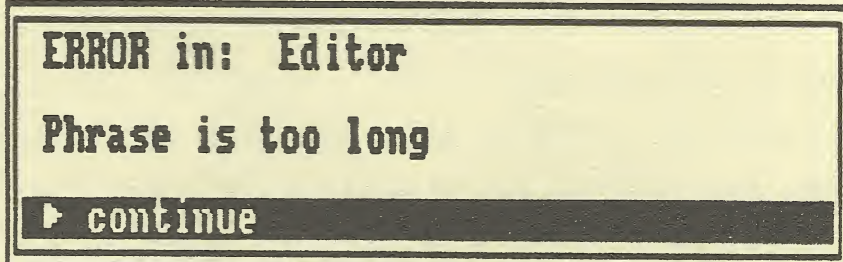
Similarly, if you have added several long phrases then you could run out of room in the set of phrases. In this case another alert message will be displayed:

```
ERROR in: Editor
Phrase store is full
▶ continue
```

This means you have used up the 972 total characters available in the set. LocoScript will save as much of the phrase as possible.

Note: If you use COPY and CUT to save the text into the phrase and you run out of room, then all is not lost. LocoScript sees that it cannot save the text and so abandons its 'cutting', leaving the remainder of your text on the screen.

Using codes in Phrases

Phrases can be used to store any of LocoScript's codes and, in fact, using phrases in this way can save you a lot of keystroking. For example, you may want to emphasise parts of your text by making them bold and italic. So you might have two phrases that look like this:

```
B: (+Bold) (+Italic)

C: (-Bold) (-Italic)
```

Then all you have to do is press PASTE and type the letter B, type in the text you want emphasised, then press PASTE and the letter C to turn off the emphasis and return to your usual text style.

An alternative way to use codes in Phrases

Mr Beal of Lanark has written in with his tip on the use of phrases. He finds it more convenient when editing text to turn off the 'Show codes' feature. When he uses LocoScript codes like Bold and Italic to emphasise parts of his text, he copies them into a phrase and also adds the ReVerse code. Then each instance of emphasised text is made clear on the screen by the ReVerse code (although, of course, you can't tell if more than one emphasis code has been used).

```
For example: B:    (+Bold) (+ReV)
             starts a bold section

             C:    (-Bold) (-ReV)
             ends a bold section.
```

Using Layouts in Phrases

Though it is a very useful technique, you should be careful about using Layout codes in phrases. Each Layout code in LocoScript 2 contains all the details of the layout and so, depending on each layout, it can prove expensive in the number of characters of a phrase that it uses up.

Each Layout code occupies a minimum of 23 characters. In addition to this minimum, every tab stop you set up within the layout uses up another character. A layout with ten tab stops will, therefore, take up 33 characters of your phrases store.

Because you are limited by the length of a phrase (255 characters) and the total length of the set (972 characters) you can see how putting lots of Layout codes into phrases might quickly use up all the available space. If you do have the space available, then putting Layout codes into phrases is perfectly alright.

Organising your phrases

- Keep your main set of phrases in PHRASES.STD in group 0 of your Start-of-day disc.

- Give each set of phrases an appropriate name so that you can be sure you are loading the set you want to use (ie. names such as LETTERS.PHR or HOUSES.PHR).

- Save other sets of phrases on the disc (and preferably in the group) which holds the documents that use these phrases.

  If you keep your phrases on the same disc then you will be able to load a new set of phrases in the middle of an Edit. Just press f1 and select "Disc Manager" then load your phrases in the normal way. You can then press EXIT to leave Disc Manager and return to your Edit.

Scale Pitch

Scale pitch is the pitch in which the Ruler line is measured. Its purpose is to let you measure the margin and tab positions in a pitch that comes naturally to you. The Scale pitch you choose affects the appearance of your document both on the screen and when it is printed.

As many of you have noticed, what looks right on the screen doesn't always look right on the printer. One way of making documents on the screen and the printer match would seem to be to use different Scale pitches at different points in your document. But we always advise you to use the same Scale pitch throughout – to see why, read on!

The Ruler Line

The Ruler line at the top of the screen is marked out in "characters" to help you calculate your margin and tab positions. It is Scale pitch that determines the actual size of these "characters" on the page.

For example, as we have illustrated on the right, if the Scale pitch is 10, then 10 of the "characters" marked out equals one inch. If the Scale pitch is 12, then 12 of the "characters" represent one inch.

```
A: group 0/DOCUMENT.000  Editing layout.          Printer idle.  Using A:
Layout   1 Pi10  LS1   CR+0   LP6        Decimal=.  Zero=0  ScalePitch10
f1=Margins       f3=Tabs       f4=Size      f5=Stock   f7=Name   f8=Options   CAN/EXIT
0.........1.........2.........3.........4.........5......
                                            ┌──────────────────────────┐
                                            │       Justify            │
                                            │       Italic             │
                                            │ ✓ Decimal marker is .    │
                                            │   Decimal marker is ,    │
                                            │ ✓ Zero character is 0    │
                                            │   Zero character is Ø    │
                                            │ Scale pitch      10      │
                                            │ √10   12   15   17   PS  │
                                            └──────────────────────────┘
```

10 "characters"= 1 inch

Screen effects

When you measure the Ruler line in the same pitch as the Character pitch that you are using, then your text will not go past the margins on the screen. (The exception to this rule is PS which we discuss later.)

If you temporarily change Character pitch, your text won't match up with your right hand margin. This is because LocoScript cannot show the changes in character size on the screen. However, LocoScript still calculates how many of the characters will fit onto the line when it is actually printed and breaks the line at the right place.

For example, as we illustrate below, if you change from a Character pitch of 12 to a Character pitch of 10, your margins won't move. But your characters are

```
A: group 0/DOCUMENT.000  Editing layout.          Printer idle.  Using A:
Layout   1 Pi12  LS1   CR+0   LP6        Decimal=.  Zero=0  ScalePitch12
f1=Margins       f3=Tabs       f4=Size      f5=Stock   f7=Name   f8=Options   CAN/EXIT
0.........1.........2.........3.........4.........5......
                                            ┌──────────────────────────┐
                                            │       Justify            │
                                            │       Italic             │
                                            │ ✓ Decimal marker is .    │
                                            │   Decimal marker is ,    │
                                            │ ✓ Zero character is 0    │
                                            │   Zero character is Ø    │
                                            │ Scale pitch      12      │
                                            │ 10   √12   15   17   PS  │
                                            └──────────────────────────┘
```

12 "characters"= 1 inch

wider and so fewer of them will fit onto the line. The text will therefore fall short of the right hand margin on the screen because LocoScript works out how many characters will fit onto the line and then breaks the line at the correct place. Of course, when you print out the document the margins will be in the correct places.

You may feel tempted at this point to change the Scale pitch so that your text matches up with your screen margins again – but don't give in to temptation! There is no need to worry about these screen effects – they are quite correct. If you change Scale pitch, you'll change the position of your margins and then your document won't print correctly.

```
0.........1.........2.........3.........4.........5.........6.........7.........8.....
(Layout)
This text is in a Character pitch of 12
and Scale Pitch of 12, so it matches up
with the margins on the screen.
(Layout)
We've changed the Character pitch
to 10 in this layout.  The text
falls short of the margin on the
screen but, as you can see, it
prints correctly.
```

```
This text is in a Character pitch of 12
and Scale Pitch of 12, so it matches up
with the margins on the screen.

We've changed the Character pitch
to 10 in this layout.  The text
falls short of the margin on the
screen but, as you can see, it
prints correctly.
```

What happens when you DO change the Scale Pitch

As an example of changing Scale Pitch within a document (see below), let us suppose that you have decided you want a left hand margin of one inch.

In your first layout, where you are using a Character pitch of 12 and a Scale pitch of 12, you set the left hand margin position at the 12th character position along the Ruler line. This gives you the one inch margin you wanted.

In your second layout you are using 10 pitch characters. If you change to a Scale pitch of 10 in this second layout then this will alter the distance to your lefthand margin. Ten of the new Ruler line "characters" now equals one inch, but your margin is still positioned at the 12th "character" position. Therefore when you print the document, the text in the second layout will start printing $^{12}/_{10}$ of an inch from the lefthand edge of the paper, that is $^{1}/_{5}$ of an inch more than before; which is not what you had intended at all. You will also get similar problems with your right margin and all of your tab stops.

You could get around this by calculating some new margins and tabs to get the same effective position. The calculation:

$$old\ position\ *\ new\ pitch\ /\ old\ pitch$$

would give you the margin and tab values you would need to use for your text so that it prints without these positions changing on the paper.

But, these are exactly the sort of calculations that Scale pitch was designed to help you avoid. If you always keep the Scale pitch the same throughout your document, you won't have to make any calculations about the position of your margins and tabs on the page; LocoScript will do this for you. Your text will always print using the same margin positions because the scale on the ruler line hasn't changed.

The appearance of your document when it is printed is more important than the way your text is displayed on the screen. So don't worry about the screen effects which result from changing Character pitch within a document. LocoScript cannot show you different sized characters on the screen but it always calculates the line breaks so that the document prints correctly. The effects you see on the screen of lines appearing to break before or after the margin is LocoScript showing where you the real line breaks are.

If you let LocoScript handle Character pitch changes on the screen in this way and resist the temptation to "correct" it manually, LocoScript will always print your documents correctly.

An example of changing the Scale pitch
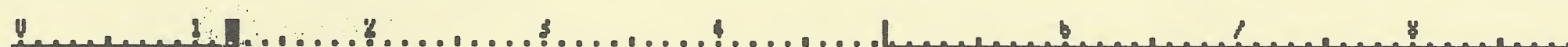

```
+..........!..........2..........+..........!..........|..........b..........7..........8..........
(Layout)↵
If you can keep your head when all
about you are losing theirs, perhaps
you've misjudged the situation.↵
↵
(Layout)↵
Do not do unto others as you would
have them do unto you.  Their tastes
may not be the same.↵
```

The text appears to line up on the screen...

```
If you can keep your head when all
about you are losing theirs, perhaps
you've misjudged the situation.


Do not do unto others as you would
have them do unto you.   Their tastes
may not be the same.
```

...but printing it gives you a very different result!

Proportional Spacing

When using a Character pitch of PS with a Scale pitch of PS, the text will not always line up with the right hand margin correctly: sometimes it will fall short of the margin and sometimes it will pass it.

This happens because in proportional spacing the widths of the characters differ and, like changes in Character pitch, these differences cannot be represented on screen. However, LocoScript calculates the line breaks accurately and the text will print out correctly.

You should note that the Scale pitch of PS is the same as the Scale pitch of 12. It has been included so that the menus relating to pitch are consistent.

Justified Text

Changing the character pitch can also affect the way justified text is represented on the screen. Justified text is usually displayed with a straight righthand edge.

If the Character pitch gives you a larger size character than the Scale pitch, the text will appear justified on the screen (with large gaps between the words!) as well as printing correctly. But if you select a Character pitch which is smaller than the Scale pitch, you will find that your text will not retain its justified appearance on the screen. This happens because you have already passed the screen's right hand margin when the line breaks and so it is not possible to make the line look justified. Of course, you will find that it prints justified.

When you <u>can</u> change Scale Pitch

The only time we recommend that you do change the Scale pitch is when you are using a different Character pitch to the default Scale pitch that LocoScript has set your document up for. If you always work in a Character pitch of 10, then that's the pitch you tend to think in, so it's best to change the Scale pitch to 10 in all the layouts. Then you'll see an accurate representation on screen of how your text will be printed.

You can ensure that future documents always use the same Scale pitch by setting up a template. If you set up all the Stock layouts you use with this Scale pitch, you won't have to worry about changing it in the future. Your documents will then be displayed on the screen and printed as you intended.

Selective Mailshots

One of the questions most asked about LocoMail is how best to get it to prepare letters for only a selection from the names and addresses stored in a data file. We are often asked, for example, if LocoMail can prepare letters only for certain clients, or only include information if the addressee meets certain criteria. LocoMail can do this very easily with just one instruction at the top of your standard letter.

For example, you might run a garden centre and want to send details of a special fertiliser to everyone who bought roses from you last year. First, you'll have to keep a list of each of your customers' names and addresses – this will form the basis of your data file.

The data file will hold records for each customer. As well as details of the names and address, you'll also need to store details of which plants each customer has bought, so that you can ask LocoMail to sort out which people bought roses.

The order in which you keep the items of information in the data file is set out in the record pattern at the beginning of the file. To keep details of the plants your customers have bought, you could keep a data item (say) PLANTS which holds the name of the plants purchased. So the record pattern might well be:

```
NAME ↵
ADDRESS; PLANTS↓
```

giving you data records like:

```
Fred Smith ↵
24 The Mount ↵
Ovington ↵
Hants; Roses↓
```

Having ensured that the information you need is available in the data file, the next stage is to work out the LocoMail instructions that will take the appropriate action.

In the example where we are just preparing the letter for rose purchasers, the choice is simple: if the customer didn't buy roses, skip to the next customer without preparing a letter.

The LocoMail instruction we need to use is a conditional instruction. What this instruction means is 'If a particular condition is true then carry out this action'. As we want to produce letters for only some of the people in our address list the action we want is one that lets us skip to the next record without preparing a letter. And we want to do this whenever the details in the record don't match the ones we want to select.

In our garden centre example, this means:

If this customer didn't buy roses then skip to the next record

The LocoMail instruction for this is:

```
(+Mail) # PLANTS ≠ "Roses" :<:*:>(-Mail)
         |        |            |
         if    condition    then action end
```

(The colons separate the commands within the instruction.)

We'll look first at the conditional part of the instruction: PLANTS ≠ "Roses". This is the simple question that you would ask yourself if you were making the selection. In this case, PLANTS is the item in your data file and you are comparing this item in each record with Roses. The ≠ means 'different from'. (You can type ≠ by holding down [EXTRA] and pressing #.) The quotation marks (") round Roses mean 'the actual text' – if we left out the quotation marks, then this would actually test whether the data items PLANTS and Roses have the same value!

So the conditional part of the instruction is asking LocoMail if the PLANTS data item in this record is different from Roses.

The other part of the instruction tells LocoMail what action to carry out when the condition is true, ie when the data item PLANTS is something other than Roses then LocoMail looks at the <:*:>. Here, < means 'then'; the * tells LocoMail to abandon the current version of the letter; and the > marks the end of the action.

So the complete instruction is:

```
(+Mail) # PLANTS ≠ "Roses" :<:*:>(-Mail)
```

which means:

If PLANTS data item in this record is different from Roses then abandon the current version of the letter.

More sophisticated selections

We used ≠ meaning 'different from' but you can just as easily test to see if the two items are the same by using = meaning 'has the same value as'. Both these tests are more flexible than they might at first appear, as LocoMail allows some latitude on what = or ≠ actually mean.

The first thing is that they both ignore whether the text is in capitals or small letters. If you wrote PLANTS = "Roses", this would be true for any of roses, ROSES, roSes etc (and of course for Roses). This is very useful if data is added to the data file over a long period of time, and perhaps by different people. It's highly unlikely that they'll type in the details using the same pattern of capital letters.

LocoMail also doesn't distinguish between the various kinds of 'white space' – that is spaces, tabs, carriage returns etc. So, it will not matter at all if the data item contains one, two or even three spaces between Red and Roses.

The test PLANTS = "Red Roses" will spot a red rose purchaser, and miss out records where different colour roses were bought, for example where the data contains: Blue Roses or Yellow Roses.

But of course, in our example we might want to find both Red Roses and Blue Roses – in fact any sort of rose! This is where LocoMail's really useful 'stretching' of the meaning of = comes in. It allows "wild card" characters.

If you use the wild card character ? in the value you're testing for, it will match any single character. If you use the wild card character *, it will match any number of characters – even no characters at all. So, if we used the test:

```
                 PLANTS = "* Roses"
```

this would find all roses, regardless of colour.

As you might imagine, wild cards are extremely useful. One trick that you can do with a wild card is turn = from meaning 'equals' to 'contains'. If you write: PLANTS = "*Roses*" this tests if the data item PLANTS consists of 'any characters' Roses 'any characters' In other words: does the data item PLANTS contain the characters Roses anywhere (and, remember that both small and capital letters are treated as equivalent).

A 'selective' mailshot

Now we'll look at the entire process of producing a letter to some of the customers in a data file.

① **Create a standard letter:**

```
                                    Roomel Garden Centre
                                           24 Hyde St
                                            Winchester
                                       Hants SO23 5DR

Mr Fred Smith
24 The Mount
Ovington
Hants                                    14th March 1988

Dear Mr Smith,

We are writing to inform all of our customers who bought roses last year that
we now have a very special fertiliser in stock - "Blooming Dung". We believe
that you will get superior flowers this year with the new fertiliser.

Blooming Dung comes in three conveniently sized packs:

→    Small→        500g→           £1.39
→    Medium→       2kg→            £2.90
→    Large→        5kg→            £5.40

Or, if you're not certain, why not drop by and take away a free sample, suitable
for your favourite pot plant? You'll see results in only a few hours!

We look forward to seeing you again soon

Yours sincerely
```

② **Add the LocoMail instructions to personalise the letter for each customer:**

```
(RAlign)                                 (XPitchPSD)Roomel Garden Centre
(RAlign)                                           24 Hyde St
(RAlign)                                            Winchester
(RAlign)                                       Hants SO23 5DR
(XPitchPS)(XMail)NAME ;Customer's Name(-Mail)
(XMail)ADDRESS ;Customer's Address(-Mail)(RAlign)(XMail)L=DATE;Today's Date(-Mai

Dear (XMail)NAME(-Mail),

We are writing to inform all of our customers who bought roses last year that
we now have a very special fertiliser in stock - "Blooming Dung". We believe
that you will get superior flowers this year with the new fertiliser.

Blooming Dung comes in three conveniently sized packs:

→    Small→        500g→           £1.39
→    Medium→       2kg→            £2.90
→    Large→        5kg→            £5.40

Or, if you're not certain, why not drop by and take away a free sample, suitable
for your favourite pot plant? You'll see results in only a few hours!

We look forward to seeing you again soon

Yours sincerely
```

> This article has been all about preparing a document for each customer who bought roses. But LocoMail can do much more than just select records based on a simple comparison. You can use several comparisons in one instruction. For example, you might want to select from a list of doctors those who live in Dorking and earn more than £20000 a year.
>
> In addition, the * isn't the only instruction that will skip to the next record. There's also a $+ instruction that will do this without abandoning the current version of the document. But this needs to be used within a 'loop' so that you can keep checking whether you want to get the next record or prepare this version of the letter.
>
> To learn more about LocoMail's powerful instructions, you'll need to read the new LocoMail User Guide, available from us at £14.95. We shall also be looking at some of the more complex tasks that LocoMail can do in later issues of *Script*.

③ **Precede the letter by a conditional instruction which abandons the letter and skips to the next record if the criteria are not met:**

```
X(XMail)# PLANTS # "Roses" :(:*:)
(-Mail)(RAlign)                          (XPitchPSD)Roomel Garden Centre
(RAlign)                                           24 Hyde St
(RAlign)                                            Winchester
(RAlign)                                       Hants SO23 5DR
(XPitchPS)(XMail)NAME ;Customer's Name(-Mail)
(XMail)ADDRESS ;Customer's Address(-Mail)(RAlign)(XMail)L=DATE;Today's Date(-Mai

Dear (XMail)NAME(-Mail),

We are writing to inform all of our customers who bought roses last year that
we now have a very special fertiliser in stock - "Blooming Dung". We believe
that you will get superior flowers this year with the new fertiliser.

Blooming Dung comes in three conveniently sized packs:

→    Small→        500g→           £1.39
→    Medium→       2kg→            £2.90
→    Large→        5kg→            £5.40

Or, if you're not certain, why not drop by and take away a free sample, suitable
for your favourite pot plant? You'll see results in only a few hours!

We look forward to seeing you again soon

Yours sincerely
```

④ **Now simply Merge it with the data file!**

```
NAME
ADDRESS;PLANTS

Fred Smith
24 The Mount
Ovington
Hants; Roses

Joan Williams
231 High St
Lancton
Hants; Azaleas

Tom Greaves
Wilde Cottage
Brook Lane
Blandford Forum
Dorset; Geraniums

Sarah Flood
14 South Avenue
Stansted
West Sussex; Roses

June Bennington
Flat 3, 24 The Square
Newport
Isle of Wight; Aspidistras

Henry Davies
West Lodge
Lattiford
Somerset; Roses
```

```
                    Roomel Garden Centre
                          24 Hyde St
                           Winchester
                       Hants SO23 5DR

Fred Smith
24 The Mount                          24th March 1988
Ovington
Hants

Dear Fred Smith,

We are writing to inform a...
we now have a very special...
that you will get superior...

Blooming Dung comes in thr...

    Small          500g
    Medium         2kg
    Large          5kg

Or, if you're not certain, ...
for your favourite pot pl...

We look forward to seeing ...

Yours sincerely
```

```
                    Roomel Garden Centre
                          24 Hyde St
                           Winchester
                       Hants SO23 5DR

Sarah Flood
14 South Avenue
Stansted
West Sussex

Dear Sarah Flood,

We are writing to inform all...
we now have a very special fe...
that you will get superior flo...

Blooming Dung comes in three ...

    Small          500g
    Medium         2kg
    Large          5kg

Or, if you're not certain, why ...
for your favourite pot plant?...

We look forward to seeing you ...

Yours sincerely
```

```
                    Roomel Garden Centre
                          24 Hyde St
                           Winchester
                       Hants SO23 5DR

Henry Davies
West Lodge
Lattiford
Somerset                              24th March 1988

Dear Henry Davies,

We are writing to inform all of our customers who bought roses last year that
we now have a very special fertiliser in stock - "Blooming Dung". We believe
that you will get superior flowers this year with the new fertiliser.

Blooming Dung comes in three conveniently sized packs:

    Small          500g           £1.39
    Medium         2kg            £2.90
    Large          5kg            £5.40

Or, if you're not certain, why not drop by and take away a free sample, suitable
for your favourite pot plant? You'll see results in only a few hours!

We look forward to seeing you again soon

Yours sincerely
```

Grid Patterns for LocoScript characters

These are the LocoChar grid patterns for the characters a to z and 0 to 9. You can use them as a guideline for the positioning of your own characters or even to produce your own versions of some of these characters.
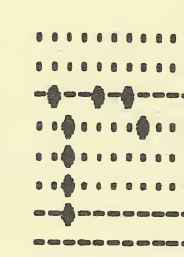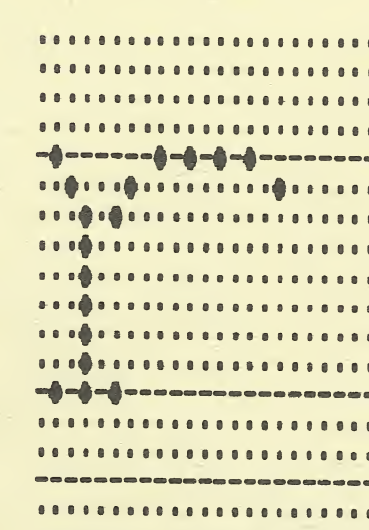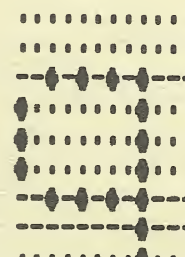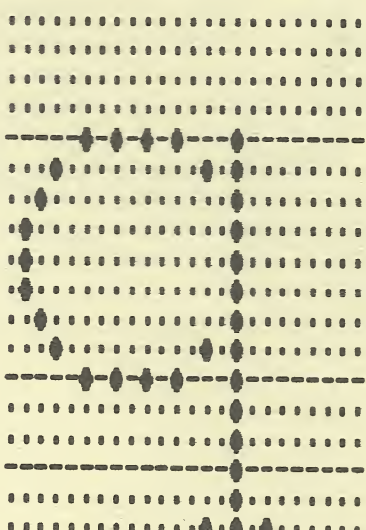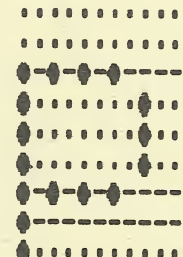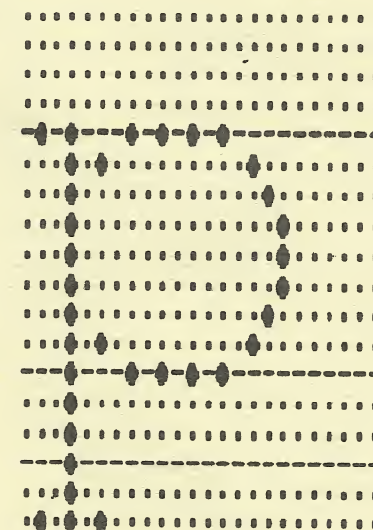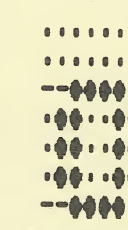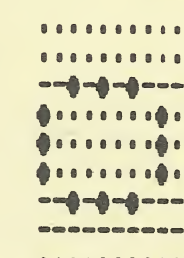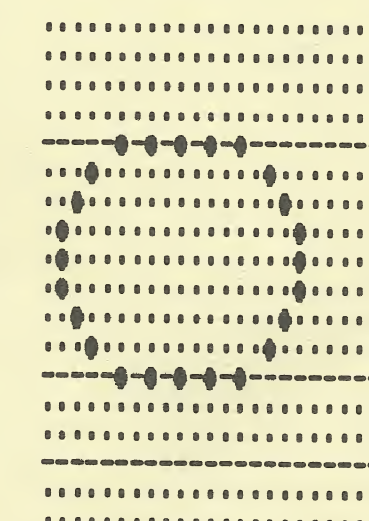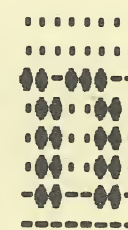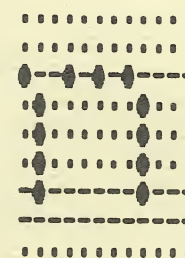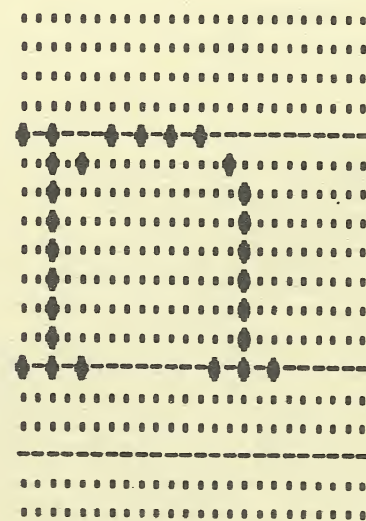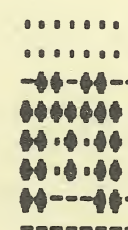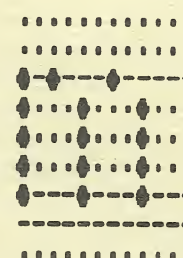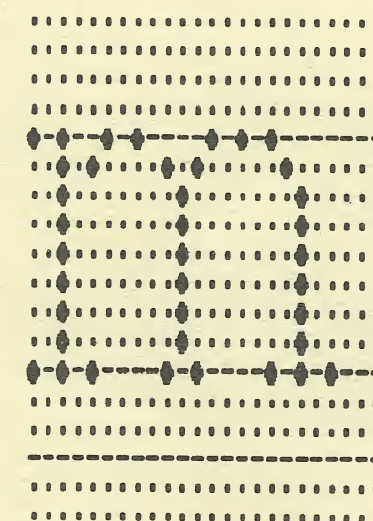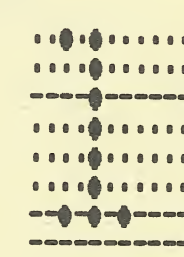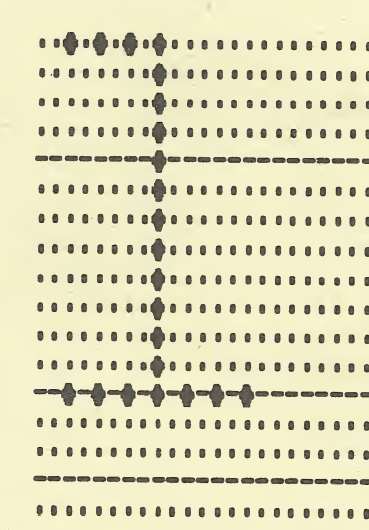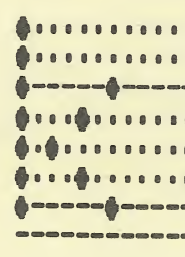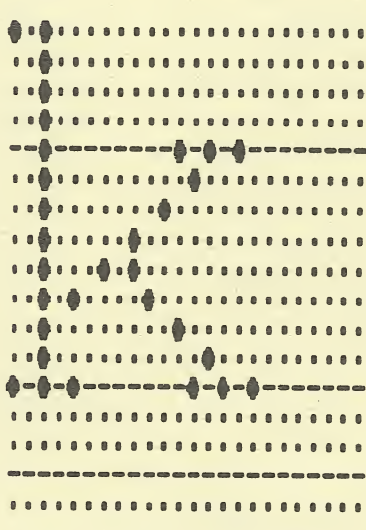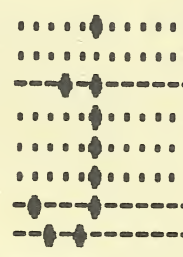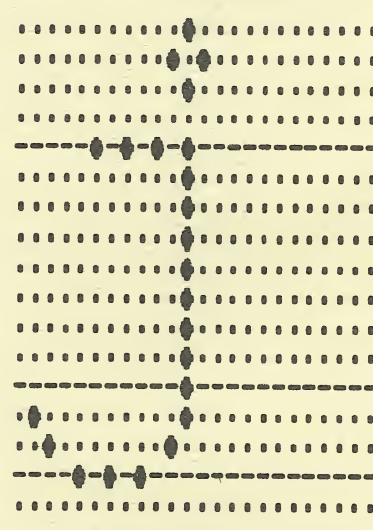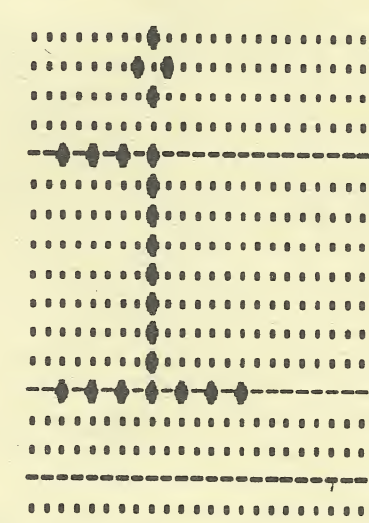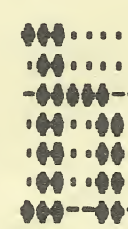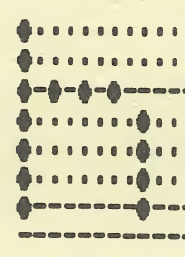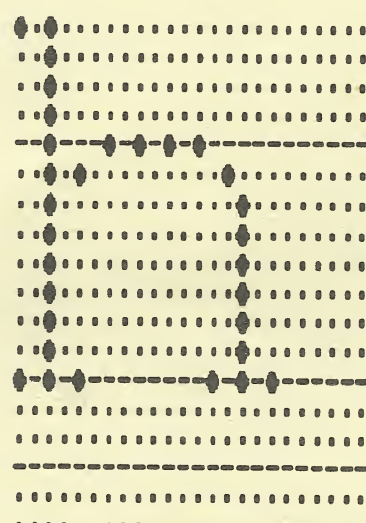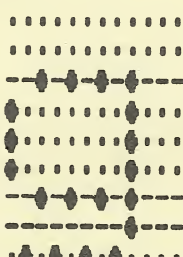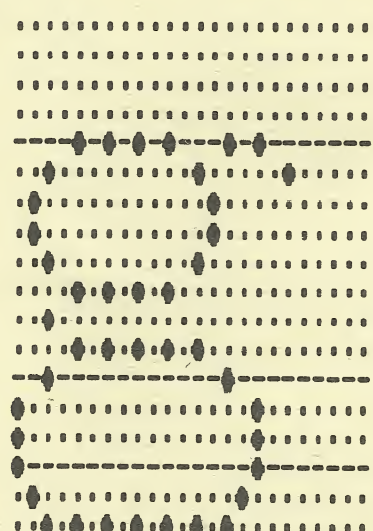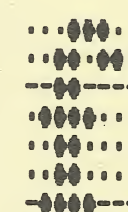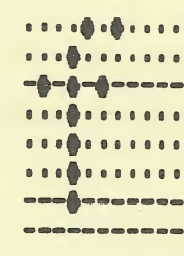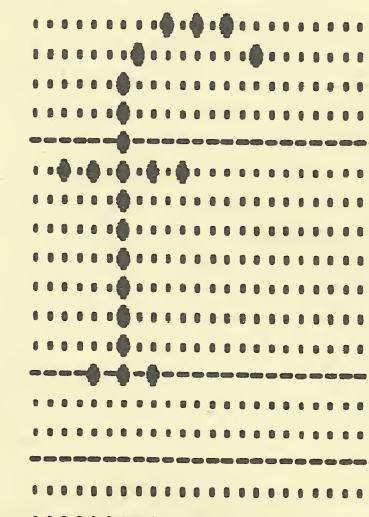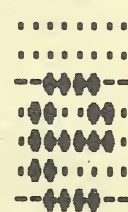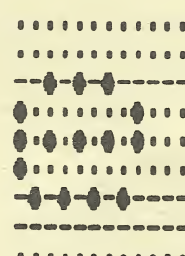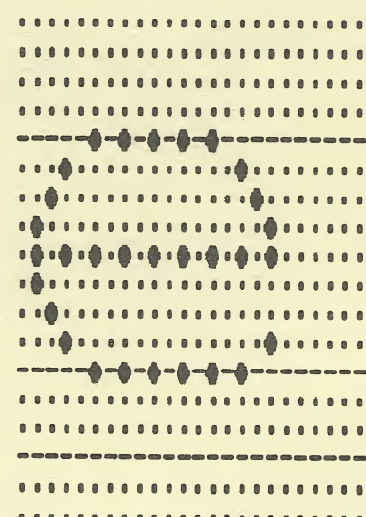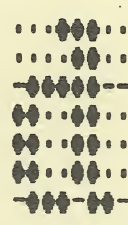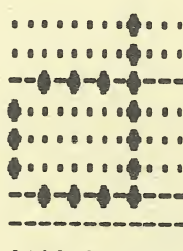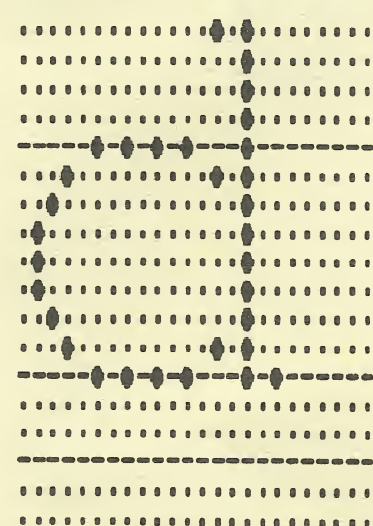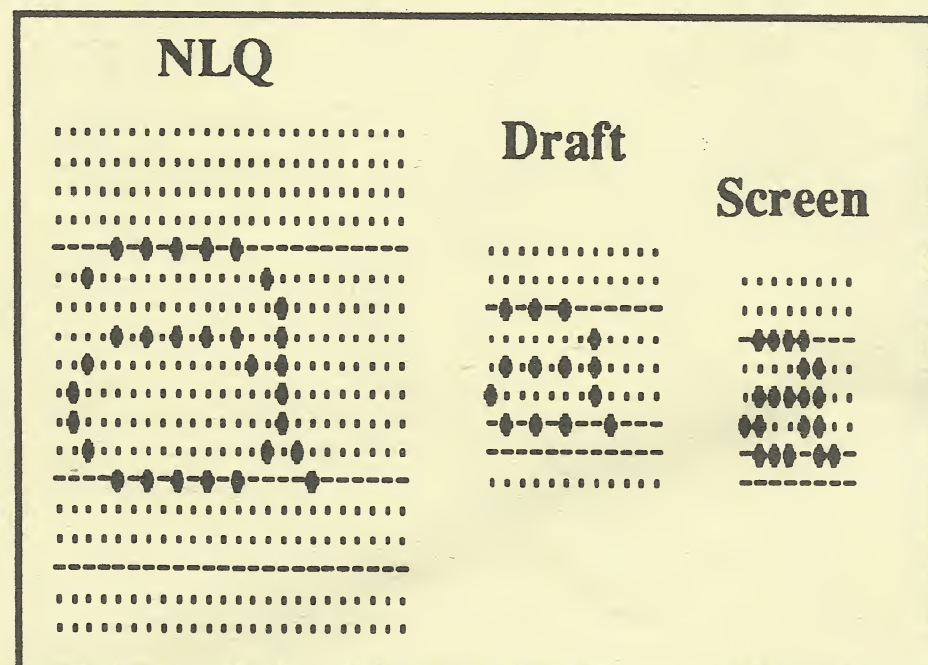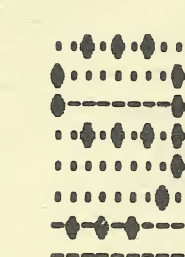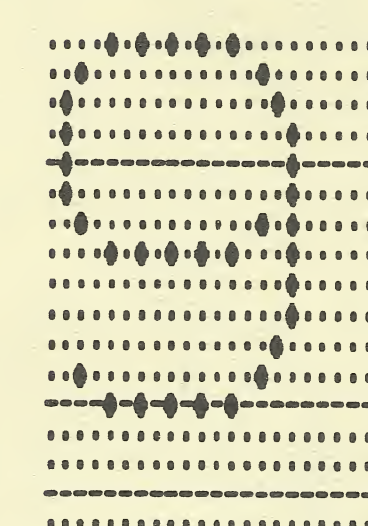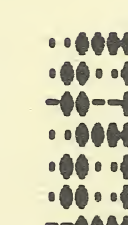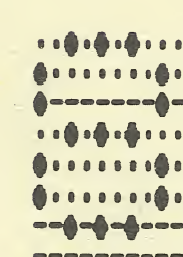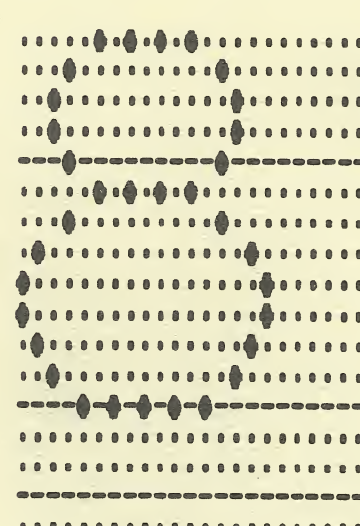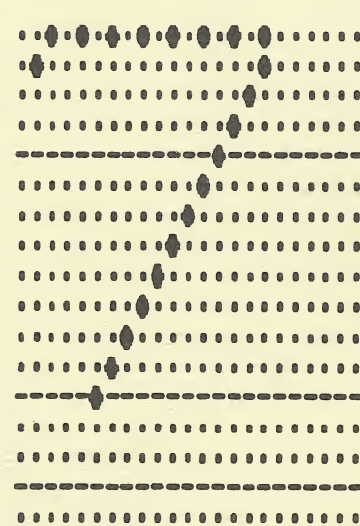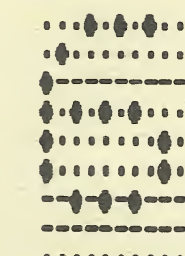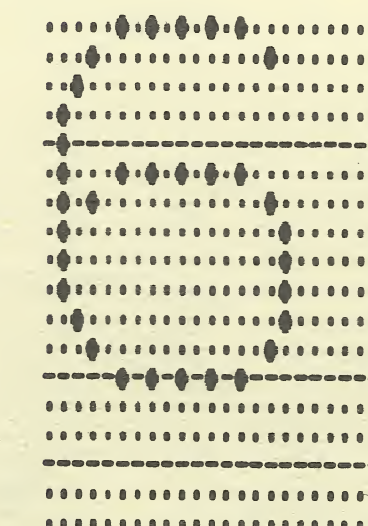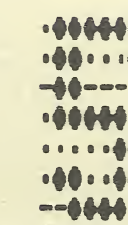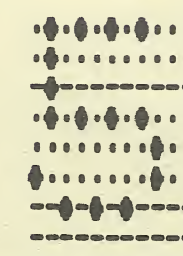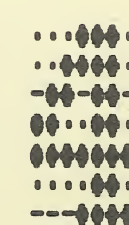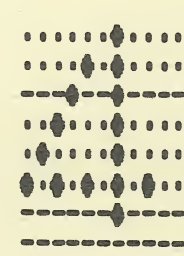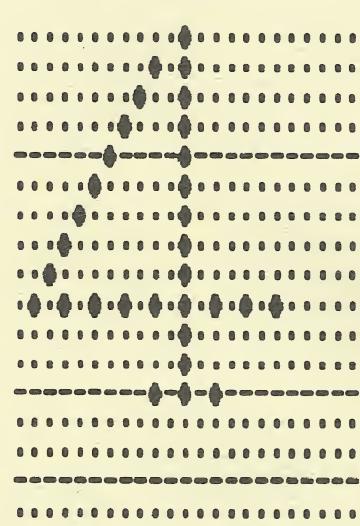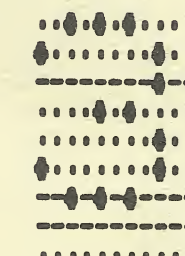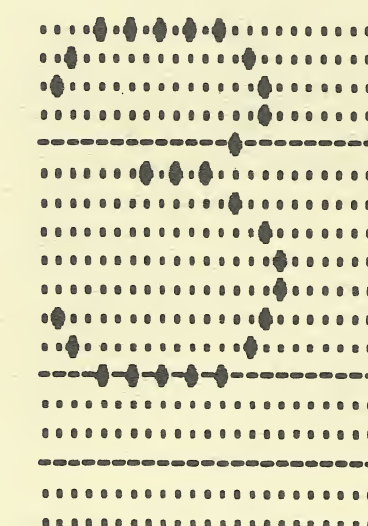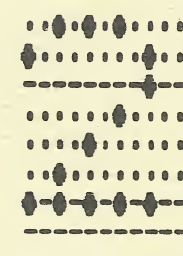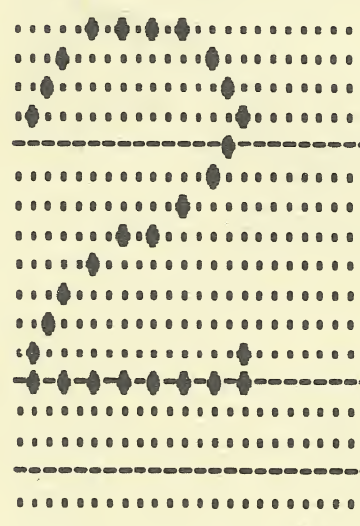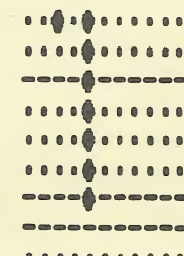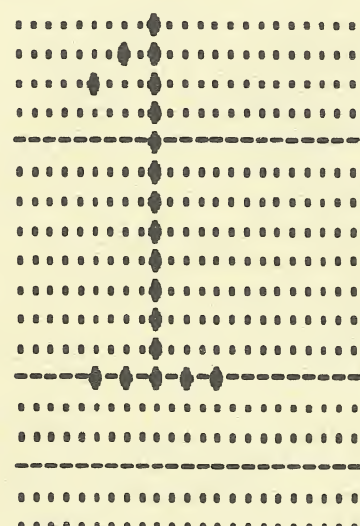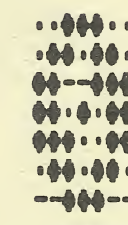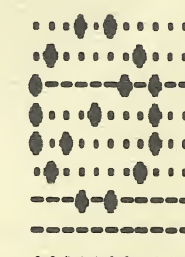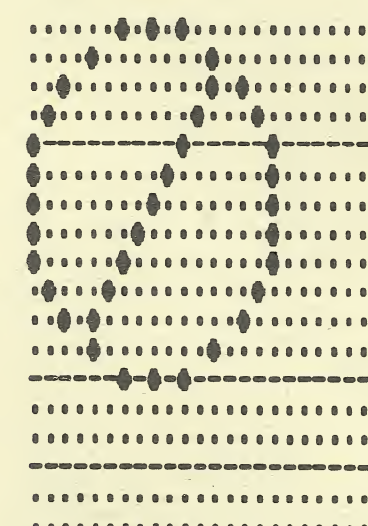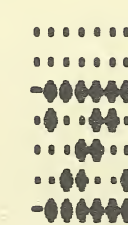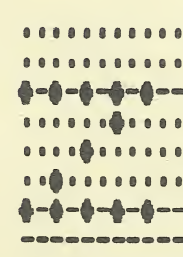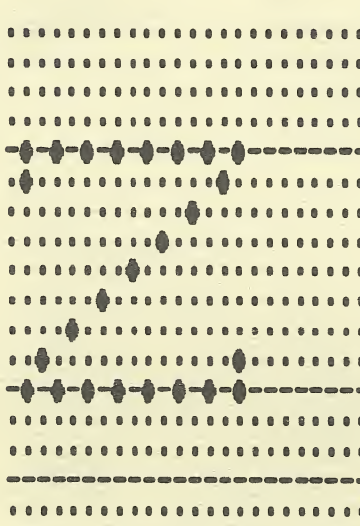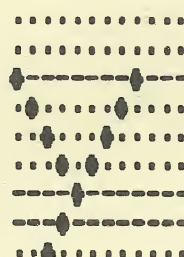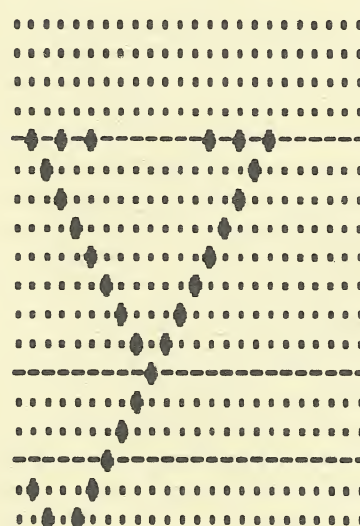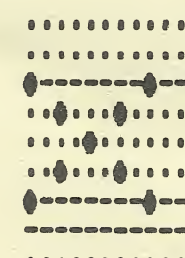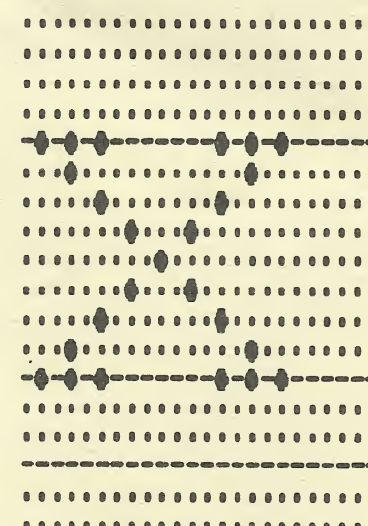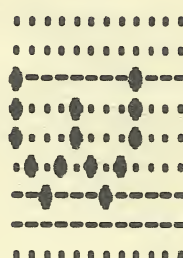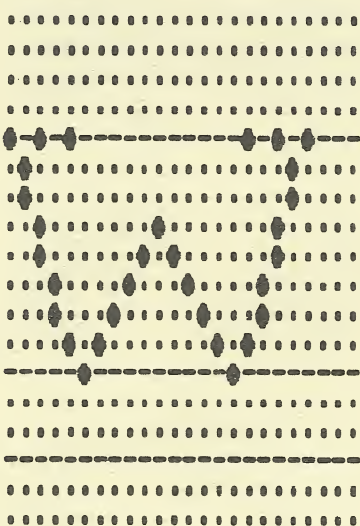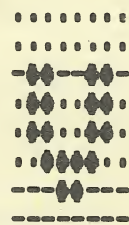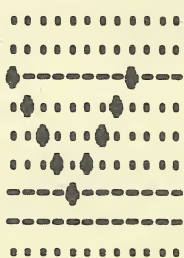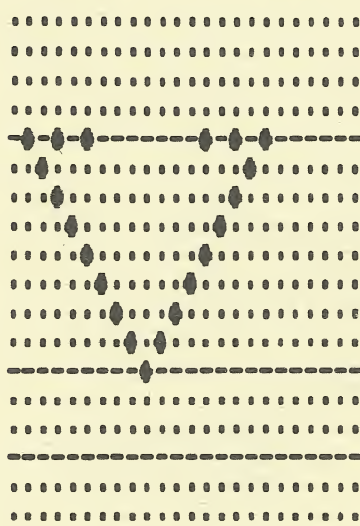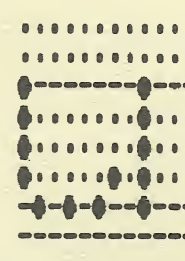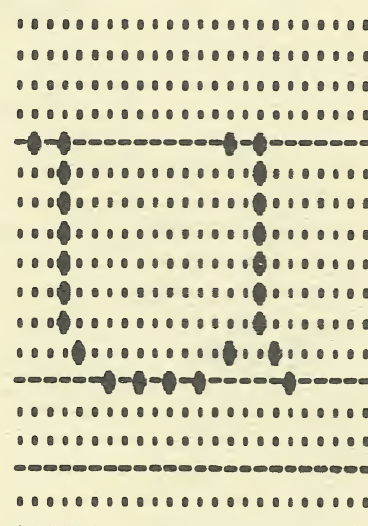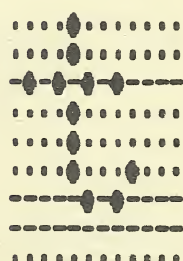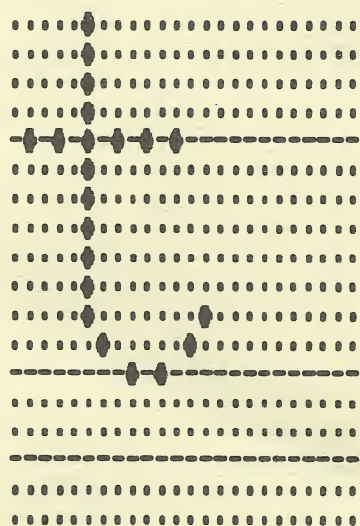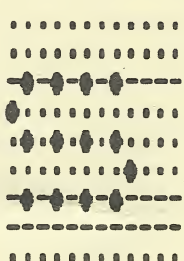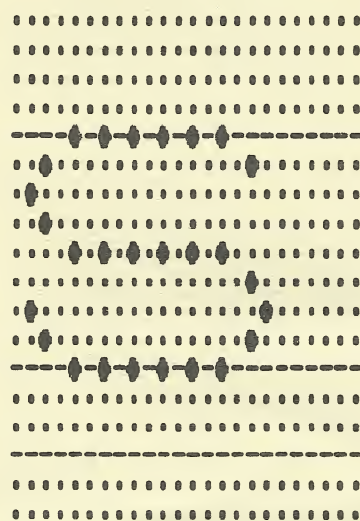
Letters

The enclosed notes show two locations where I set out names from the left margin with the space bar. The screen shows a neat alignment, confirmed by f8 Blanks and Spaces, but the print-out gives a misalignment to the second and and subsequent lines – not always by the same amount.

It is evident that one should always set out alignment with Tabs, but I cannot understand why manual setting out gives random results – this doesn't seem to be in the nature of the beast!
Mr DA, St Albans

The reason your text appears to be perfectly aligned on the screen but prints incorrectly is because you are using proportional spacing. In proportional spacing the widths of the characters vary but LocoScript cannot show the difference in the size of the characters on the screen. Your text appears to line up correctly on the screen, but when you print the document the text is no longer aligned.

We advise you to always use tab stops to line up text. If you do this, your text will appear aligned on the screen and will always print correctly. This is essential when you are using proportional spacing, and also useful when you edit text in any Character pitch. If you have lined up text using spaces, then any editing you do will immediately distort the alignment. If you always use tab stops, you won't have this problem.

I have experienced the very frustrating problem of LocoScript refusing to fill all lines on the page as given in the top right corner of the screen. Line 57 is used rarely, if ever. Often line 54 is the last line that can be fitted on the page. When an attempt is made to put in another line, both the new line and line 54 are placed on a new page!
Mr ML, Bracknell

The fact that LocoScript is not using the full length of the page suggests the page break option to prevent widows and orphans is selected . A "widow" is the first line of a paragraph appearing alone at the bottom of a page. An "orphan" is the last line of a paragraph appearing alone at the top of the page. In general, the presentation of your text is improved if these single lines don't appear, so in the absence of a TEMPLATE.STD, LocoScript selects this option for you when you create a document. The result is that if the first line of a paragraph falls on the last line of the page, LocoScript breaks the page on the line above, thereby causing the paragraph to start on the next page.

If you want to use all the lines of your page and are not worried about widows or orphans, go into the Document Set-up and select the `f5` *Page menu. Move the cursor to 'Page break control' and press* `ENTER` *. The option you need to select is 'Allow any page break' so with the cursor over this option, press the* `⊞` *key. You will then be able to use the full length of the page for your text.*

I am having problems with the page layout and paper type mechanism within your LocoScript 2. I have top and bottom gaps of 1 line, a header zone of 3 and a footer zone of 2; leaving 59 lines of text on 66 continuous paper.

I find that there is a top gap of two lines and no bottom gap. There should at least be a bottom gap of two, ie one line from the footer zone and one line from the gap. Instead the top gap is larger. I have sent screen dumps of the relevant menus and example output from a college programming assignment.
Mr DS, Worthing

Your settings all seem to be perfectly OK. As you consistently get a Top Gap which is too big and a Bottom Gap which is too small, we think you are probably feeding your paper into the printer slightly too far each time you load fresh paper. When you use continuous stationery, you should start with the printhead right at the top of a page because LocoScript expects to start at line 1. With single sheet stationery, the mechanism loads the paper so the printhead is further down and LocoScript expects to start at line 7.

My reading of this section (Discs and two-drive PCWs in the LocoScript 2 manual) is that identical discs may be used in the two drives the only difference being in the way they are formatted. If this is the case is there any advantage to be gained in using CF2DD discs in drive B rather than CF2 discs. Also, when appropriately formatted, is there any reason why CF2DD discs should not be used in drive A.
Mr JK, Paisley

The difference between a CF2 disc and a CF2DD disc is one of quality (– and hence one of price!).

Initially, it was thought that you could only use the higher quality discs in the higher capacity drives. However, this no longer seems to be the case and so Amstrad now recommend using either CF2 or CF2DD discs. As you can format both CF2 discs and CF2DD discs for use in either drive, there is no real advantage in buying CF2DD discs specifically for use in Drive B.

All you need think about when using discs is whether they are formatted correctly for the drive in which you want to use them.

Thank you for my copy of LocoScript 2, which I am finding a great improvement on LocoScript 1. However, I have come up against a snag that I can't seem to solve.

When I try to change the Layout from one to another during the course of a chapter, I always seem to end up with only the last stock layout that I have made as the standard layout.

I know I am a new-comer to word processing and to computing, but I had no difficulty using two or three different layouts with LocoScript 1, so obviously I am going wrong somewhere.
Mrs JM, Warrington

We believe that your problem is that you are using the 'Change layout' option instead of the 'New layout' option in the `f2` *Layout menu.*

'Change layout' and 'New layout' both let you set new margins and tabs etc. The difference between them is the effect they have when you return to the document. 'Change layout' changes the details of the layout you are currently working in and so affects all the text that has been laid out using this layout. 'New layout' inserts a Layout code at your current cursor position – which only affects the text after the code. So if you want to keep the current layout from the earlier part of your text, but use a different one for the text that follows, the option you want is 'New layout'.

As you observed, if you don't have any Layout codes in your document, any changes you make to the layout using the 'Change layout' option also change Stock Layout 1 because this is the layout automatically used at the start of each document.

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Letters

How can I get my user dictionary to load from the disc straight into the M memory as the main dictionary does? Is it possible to bring "Ignore this word" to the top of the list of options offered when LocoSpell detects a spelling mistake. This action – "ignore" – is appropriate in 99 out of 100 times the options are displayed, and at present it requires five strokes. One stroke only would be much faster.
Mr MA, Worksop

You can ensure that LocoScript will load your user dictionary automatically by placing it in group 0 or group 7 of your Start-of-day disc or a disc in Drive B. It will then be loaded into Drive M, along with the system dictionary, whenever you start up.

It isn't possible to bring "Ignore this word" to the top of the list of options. However, like all of LocoScript's menus, you can take a short cut by simply pressing the letter(s) of the option that is marked in capitals. This gives you the action you want in just two keystrokes. Press 'I' and the menu cursor will move to the option "Ignore this word". Then press ENTER to accept this option and LocoSpell will ignore the word and continue checking the document.

In any case, are you sure that "Ignore this word" is really the option you want? If you use the "Mark this word correct" option, LocoSpell will mark in the document that this word is spelt correctly and so it will not have to stop the next time that you spell-check the document.

Whilst using this version of LocoScript 2 I have noticed from time to time that when I load it on my PCW8512 I am told that Drive B is not fitted. This means that I have to reset the machine and insert a disc into Drive B whilst the A disc is being read.
Mr MB, Wolverhampton

The 'Drive B not fitted' message is a problem with your hardware and not with any version of LocoScript. When you load LocoScript, one of the first things it does is to ask the computer for information about the hardware that the machine is using. This includes the disc drives that are connected, which model computer is being used, whether an interface is connected, and how much memory is available.

LocoScript displays information about the drives on the Disc Manager Screen. If the computer reports that there is no Drive B, then LocoScript will faithfully display the message 'not fitted'. The fact that you experience this problem occasionally suggests that there may be an intermittent fault with your machine and we suggest that you contact your dealer.

Note: This problem can arise with 5¼" disc drives because they do not always send back the right information. But you can get round the problem by putting a disc in the drive before you start up as this has the effect of returning the correct signal to LocoScript.

I recently upgraded my LocoScript 2 to version 2.12 and have had a problem I would value help with. I was using version 2.00 with the D630 printer driver to drive a Juki 6100 and all worked well but I wanted to use some additional characters on the Triumph Adler wheel. I have reconfigured my start-of-day disc using now the Juki 6100 driver and although the characters print it is always double spacing despite previous copies of a document using single spacing.
Mr SF, Jesmond

We believe your printer is printing text in double line spacing because the dip switch settings are incorrect. There is a dip switch on your printer for Auto Line Feed/Carriage Return and we think your problem will be solved if you switch this to the OFF position.

The position of this switch on your JUKI 6100 did not matter on versions of LocoScript 2 prior to 2.12 because the printer drivers used a complex command which was unaffected by the dip switch settings.

We altered the drivers that we produced for version 2.12 so that they no longer use this command. We did this so that LocoScript could support many printers which claimed compatibility with leading printers such as the Diablo 630, but which did not in fact support this particular command.

My machine is a PCW8256 which I have upgraded for using LocoScript 2. Can you please tell me the maximum number of kilobytes that I can use without filling the disc and endangering some of my documents?
Mr AM, London

After formatting a single-density disc, you have 173k available for documents on that disc. If you use up the space whilst you are editing a document, LocoScript 2 warns you that the disc is full and gives you the option to 'Run Disc Manager'. Accepting this option will return you to the Disc Manager where you can make room on your disc by erasing documents or moving them into Drive M. When you have created enough space on your disc to finish editing the document, you can then insert another disc on which to save the documents you temporarily placed in Drive M.

The only time you might lose a document is when you are editing a large document and you scroll backwards through it. When you scroll backwards in a document, a copy of the document is placed on Drive M and so there needs to be enough space on Drive M for the whole document. You have upgraded the memory of your PCW8256, so you are very unlikely to experience any problem with the size of Drive M.

In general, we advise you to keep documents below 25–30k simply because they are easier to edit. The longer the document, the longer it will take you to move through it and make changes.

It is a pity that one cannot make the selection of the new LocoChar character set automatic for the screen as it is for the printer. In other words, there appears to be no way to ensure that all new documents use the new set on the screen, even though it now always appears on the printer.
Mr MM, Boscastle

You can make this selection automatic for new documents by using LocoScript's template feature. Once you have updated your SETTINGS.STD file to include this new Character Set, you can set up a template to use these characters. Simply edit the template, and then select the new Character Set in the f6 Printing menu of the Document Set-up. Then all the documents you create using this template will automatically be set up for this Character Set – you won't have to do anything. Existing documents still have to be updated individually.

Letters

The Editor welcomes letters from readers of Script, so keep writing in with your comments and queries. We will continue to publish letters which are of general interest to our readers.

I am interested in the facility which enables me to automatically add an extra space between paragraphs – as detailed on page 106 in the user guide. I wonder, however, if it is possible to readily distinguish for this purpose between the end of a paragraph and the end of a quotation cited in the text. In other words, is it necessary for the extra spacing to be added to every 'return' or is it possible to set up 'returns' with and without extra spacing?
Mr JL, Coventry

There are two ways of adjusting the extra spacing between paragraphs. Carriage Return extra spacing is one of the things you can set in a layout, so one option is to use different layouts for your paragraphs and quotations. Alternatively, you can control the Carriage Return extra spacing by inserting (+CR) codes. Press the ⊞ key and type CR (or pick CR extra from the menu that appears), type in the extra spacing you require and then press ENTER. *The (+CR) code will then be placed in your document. You just have to put one of these codes on the last line of each type of paragraph.*

We suggest that you set up a layout for the quotations you use in your documents. Then you can set up the Carriage return extra spacing you require, as well as other features that will distinguish your quotations from the rest of the text. For example, you could use different margin positions, or select a different character style such as bold or italic for this text. Using layouts also means that if you change your mind about the spacing you want to have, you can alter every quotation very easily by using Layout Exchange (as described in Issue 2).

Why does LocoScript always count its lines in a line pitch of 6? The reason I ask is because I've been trying to set up some Kardex-style formats in a line pitch of 8, and have been finding great difficulty with the odd-ball system of line-count when having to count in a line pitch of 6. And, inevitably (?) the point at which I want to put my last line falls on a 'double' line-count, so I can either have my Index line one line up from the bottom – or one line over into the next page! I have a nasty feeling I'm doing something 'thick'.
Mr HB, Rockcliffe

LocoScript 2 measures the length of the page in a standard pitch of 6 lines per inch. The lines are always counted in this pitch, regardless of the line pitch you are using in your document. We use this standard line pitch so that, in particular, you do not get sudden changes in the line count when you cursor through local line pitch changes.

Counting the lines in this pitch does not mean you cannot use line pitches of 5, 7½ or 8 – it's merely that the position of your cursor on the screen is not expressed in those units. This explains the 'double' line-count effect you have observed.

LocoScript always calculates accurately the number of lines that will fit on the page. So we don't think that the problem you are experiencing is connected with the way LocoScript shows the line count to you. Instead we suspect you still have "Widow and Orphan" protection on, so LocoScript is breaking the page to prevent a single line appearing at the bottom of your page.

I recently had my PCW8256 upgraded with extra memory in order to make the best use of LocoSpell, and according to an article in "8000 Plus", Issue 9, June 1987, after upgrading the expanded version should show "358k free".

LocoScript 1.20 comes close enough to a total of 358k – "4k used, 352k free" – both on the Master disc and my Start of day disc.

However, having now purchased LocoScript v 2.14, on loading the Master Disc I get the message "4k used 312k free in M drive", a total of 316k; and when loading my Start of Day disc, the message now becomes "4k used 296k free", a total of 300k.
Mrs SD, Southsea

LocoScript 2 is a much larger program than LocoScript 1 and therefore takes up more of the memory once it is loaded. This extra software has provided you with all of LocoScript 2's new features such as a wide range of external printers and twice as many characters. LocoScript 2 also reserves some extra memory for itself to hold information about the Disc Management Screen and the different editing screens.

The memory used by the LocoScript 2 program is not included in the totals of space used. Your upgraded PCW is displaying the correct values for the amount of memory on Drive M.

Your Start-of-day disc is using up more of the memory than your master LocoScript 2 disc, we suspect, because you have installed LocoSpell on it. LocoSpell uses an extra 16k of memory.

Our problem is with the different sizes of paper, say, for instance, you have a document which you have typed out in A4 and you wish to change it to A5 for printing. When doing A5 landscape the system described in the book worked perfectly but trying to do A5 Portrait proved useless – the depth was OK but the width remained the same. We also tried to change to A5 Portrait by going into the document and changing via the Document Setup, this was easy enough to do but the document still printed out in the wrong width. Do you have to change the margins manually? If so, it seems unnecessary to have 'Portrait' option in LocoScript 2.
Ms AM, Glasgow

You do indeed have to change the margins manually. Unfortunately, early versions of the User Guide appear to have misled some of you over this. We have explained the need to change margins more clearly in later versions.

When LocoScript prints a document, it only needs to know the length of the paper you are using. It leaves you to set the margins, as only you know how much of the width of the page you want to use.

There is a width setting for single sheet stationery, but its purpose is to tell LocoScript the length of the paper when it is turned on its side This enables you to use the paper widthways without having to have a Paper type specially for this purpose.

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PostScript

One of the features which distinguishes LocoScript from other word processors is its support for different national languages. We've recently added Welsh to the list of national versions we supply – as you probably guessed from the Welsh news item in the last issue. The actual translation of LocoScript's messages into the appropriate language is the one aspect of producing a national version that we at Locomotive are unable to do. So for the translation into Welsh we recruited John Hughes. He's admirably qualified in two respects for the job – he's Welsh and he's written two successful books on LocoScript. The following is his view of the task of we gave him.

"Although English is the undisputed international language of computing – even the computers that control the flow of traffic round central Peking are programmed in English – there are still millions of computer users world-wide who either don't speak English at all or who don't really feel comfortable with it.

"Despite this, many computer programs remain resolutely English-only; even when the original programmers are Spanish or French-speaking, it makes commercial sense for them to produce most of their work in English, because the costs of translating a complete program from one language into another are often very high.

"LocoScript 2 is something of an exception to this rule. It was designed from the beginning to be easy to translate into different languages and to use on different keyboards. The enormous character set can cope with almost anything that any language based on the Roman, Greek or Cyrillic alphabets can throw at it, and all the messages and prompts are concentrated into a few key locations in the program instead of being scattered all through it as is usually the case; consequently, versions of LocoScript 2 are available in French, German, Spanish and many other world languages.

"And Welsh. It sometimes comes as a surprise to people raised on the belief that all Welshmen say 'Indeed to goodness' and 'Look-you' to discover that there are about half a million people in Wales who speak Welsh as their first language, and who do it not out of any especial desire to be odd or funny, but simply because it's the language which they learned at home and speak in school or at work. Not surprisingly, a lot of individuals, as well as education authorities, colleges and businesses, would like to be able to do their word processing in the same language as they do most of the rest of their day-to-day living, and so the invitation went out to produce a translation of LocoScript 2 into Welsh. I must admit that when I first got involved in this, I wasn't quite sure of what I was letting myself in for. I soon found out, for a 'translation kit' arrived through the post a few days later. It consisted of a couple of pages of guidance and a disc containing the text of all the program messages, prompts and menus to be translated.

"I listed these out on my PCW and discovered that there were hundreds of them! To make things worse, it obviously wasn't going to be possible to simply translate the English text into Welsh. Some messages had to be squeezed into such limited spaces as the columns on the disc management screen; others, particularly those needed for the Set and Clear menus, had to be carefully phrased to allow options to be chosen by pressing particular sequences of letters. And the total permissible length of the messages was in any case restricted by the strictly rationed space available in LocoScript 2 itself. Fortunately Welsh isn't a very verbose language – translating LocoScript 2 into French or Spanish would have been much more trying.

"The next stage involved compressing all the translated messages into the smallest possible space. This is a very complex process, but basically it involves finding all the different places where the same word or phrase is used and eliminating all unnecessary duplication.

"Even when that task was successfully completed, and with the Welsh version of LocoScript 2 ready to go on the market, the job wasn't quite finished, because the search was under way for a suitable dictionary that we could use as the basis for a Welsh version of LocoSpell. And after that? Who knows?"

In future issues:

We'll look at how you can make the most of LocoScript's groups to organise your documents. We covered the general use of Stock layouts in the first three issues, so next we'll look at some of the more imaginative uses of layouts in your documents.